

Settlement Act, 1907," will apply, and our recommendations are made in accordance therewith.

Altogether the area inquired into, and subject to our recommendations, is 89,674 acres. We have asked to be referred to the Native Land Court the further subdivisions of some blocks of the total area of 61,861 acres. There are also papatupu blocks of the area of 6,716 acres. The total area of lands to be investigated, including papatupu lands and lands referred to the Court, is 181,574 acres.

General Matters.

We have placed in an appendix to this report a memorandum signed by the chiefs and some of the members of the Ngati-Whakaue Hapu. It was read to us at the sitting of the Commission, and expressed the views of the hapu. The allegations made in the memorandum, especially those affecting the acquisition of the Township of Rotorua by the Crown, are such that they deserve explanation or denial by the Native Land Purchase Department. The truth or falsity of the charges must be known to that Department. If it be a fact that, whilst acting as trustee for the Native owners, the Crown, having prohibited the Natives from selling their lands, bought them at an inadequate price, the action of the Crown cannot be defended. A transaction of that character would, if it took place between an ordinary trustee and a beneficiary, be set aside by any Court of justice before whom the transaction came for decision. If it be found, therefore, that the statements in the memorandum cannot be disputed by the Department, then certainly the Ngati-Whakaue Hapu should now receive from the Crown beneficent consideration. This is a matter in our opinion that deserves the careful inquiry and consideration of Your Excellency's Advisers.

It hardly comes within our province perhaps to deal with a grievance of which the Arawas make great complaint. The matter, however, was brought before us, and we think it to be our duty to represent it to Your Excellency. The indigenous fish in the streams and lakes of their district have been almost wholly destroyed by the trout that have been placed in these streams and lakes. The trout were placed there as a great attraction to tourists and others visiting the Thermal-Springs District. That the Maoris have suffered a grievous loss by the destruction of the indigenous fish cannot be denied. These fish were a great part of their food-supply. They are not allowed to fish for trout unless they pay the license fee demanded by the Tourist Department. The bitterness felt at the destruction of their indigenous fish, and at the punishment inflicted on them if they fish for trout in their own streams, is very great. We think that the Tourist Department could allay this feeling, and remedy a real injustice that has been inflicted on the Maori landowners of this district if they issued licenses free of charge to the heads of families, permitting them at stated times to catch trout for food and not for sale. Were such a concession granted, no injury would result to the trout-fishing in the district, and the Maoris would feel that the Government had attempted, at all events, to remedy their grievance.

Maori Farming.

The Arawas as a people are active and intelligent, and under supervision are capable and energetic workmen. They have given satisfaction to the Public Works and Forestry Departments, and to the late Rotorua Town Board. These employers speak in high terms of their intelligence, capacity, and assiduity. There is amongst them splendid material awaiting organization and development on industrial lines, and we are of opinion that it is the duty of the State to undertake such organization and development. For this purpose we suggest—and the Natives, we are happy to say, are in favour of the scheme—that there should be a communal farm, of from two to three thousand acres in area, set apart for each of the following hapus:—

Ngati-Whakaue,
Tuhourangi, and
Ngati-Uenukukopako,

and two communal farms for the Ngati-Pikiao.